

Principal Chief, George Thurman greets Gaming Commission Attorney, Elizabeth L. Homer of Washington, D.C. on her visit to the tribal offices.

February is Heart Health Month

Day in, day out, many of us get stuck in our "rut" of day-to-day life and selfcare may come in last place on our priority list. Sometimes the drive-thru window seems easier and once you sit down after work in the evening, getting up again can be mentally difficult. The ultimate cost of those choices can be hard to swallow.

The Centers for Disease Control states that heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women. The estimated dollar cost for one year is in the billions. Heart Disease is the cause of 19.8% of all death in Native Americans¹. What's my Risk?

Certain conditions can increase your risk. These include elevated cholesterol, high blood pressure, and uncontrolled diabetes¹. Hereditary factors may also exist that increase your risk. However, there are a number of factors that we can control.

Cigarette smoking can increase clotting in the arteries, raise blood pressure, and decrease the amount of oxygen that the blood can carry¹. Diets high in saturated and trans fats, sodium, and processed foods can increase risk¹. Lack of physical activity has been linked to heart disease¹. A study of more than 120,000 American Adults found that people who spend more time sitting have a shorter life span². On the flip side, physical activity can help decrease risk by managing other risk factors, such as blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and HDL cholesterol¹. Physical activity also helps you feel good so that your everyday quality of life is improved. Obesity is also a Network. Available at: http://topnews. risk factor¹. Waist circumference is an easy way for you to measure your risk based on excess body weight. A healthy waist size for women is less than 35 inches and for men less than 40 inches³. Alcohol use can increase blood pressure and triglycerides¹, which are fats in the blood. Too much triglyceride in the blood can increase the clotting of your arteries.

Resources at the Merle Boyd Center

If you find yourself at risk for heart Accessed December 21, 2010.

disease, there are a number of things you can do to prevent or delay onset. A good place to start is to have a conversation with your primary care physician about your

The Boyd Center has a registered dietitian who can help you understand how your diet effects your risk. Slow change and short term lifestyle goals are important to making progress. A dietitian can help you with making a lifestyle of healthy eating. If you feel you lack the cooking skills necessary, cooking classes have begun once a month in the teaching kitchen. One-on-one skill classes may be considered on a case-bycase basis.

The exercise specialist at the Boyd Center has developed several fun classes for individuals at all fitness levels. One-onone program development is also available. Assessments can help you monitor your progress as you watch your body get stronger and more efficient. Joining the Commit to Be Fit Club may be the perfect motivator to get you started! By Erica Dean, RD/LD

References:

1. Heart Disease Facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/ heartdisease/facts.htm. Accessed December 21, 2010.

2. Sharma, Rasik. Sitting Can Decrease Your Lifespan. TopNews co.uk/29620-sitting-can-decreasevour-lifespan. Accessed December 21,

3. Classification of Overweight and Obesity by BMI, Waist Circumference, and Associated Disease Risks. Nation Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/ heart/obesity/lose wt/bmi dis.htm.













